

RELIGIOUS MATTERS.

LAID ASIDE.

My Master, at Thy call 'twas sweet
To follow Thee with eager feet;
Amidst the toiling throng to take
The lowliest place for Thy dear sake;
To seek Thy lost o'er mountains cold,
And help them homeward to the fold.

But oh! 'tis hard to wait and pine,
To still this restless heart of mine;
To watch the conflict, and to be
No wrestler in the ranks for Thee—
A broken vessel laid aside—
The longing left, the strength denied.

Help me, O Master, to attain
Self-conquest, in this hour of pain,
With folded hands to meet Thy will
Unmurmuring, and trust Thee still.—
To watch and wait till sufferings cease,
And patience triumphs into peace.

I was so eager in the throng,
So hopeful, and I felt so strong.
As though Thy hand commissioned me
A leader in Thy cause to be.
This lesson of Thy love I need,
To teach me I am weak indeed.

Soon must these eyes have ceased to weep;
These hands be folded, pale, in sleep;
The burden dropped, the cross laid down,
Perhaps to lift a starless crown.
What matters, Master, if we meet,
Where I can kneel and kiss Thy feet.
—Rev. W. Houghton, in Chicago Advance.

POWER OF MUSIC.

The Music by Which It Is a Help and a Strength to Live.

A little while ago there was one of those colliery accidents which make a sensitive person almost shrink from the sight of burning coal. This time the shaft of the Dolcath mine in Cornwall collapsed, and eight men were entombed.

After the rescuing party had been at work many hours clearing away the rubbish, they stopped and listened. It is a well-known fact that sound penetrates long distances in the body of the earth. As they put their ears to the ground in breathless expectancy, a faint sound of human voices was heard. Overjoyed to find their comrades still alive, the men were about to utter a shout of encouragement, when the foreman put his finger to his lips with a warning gesture, for the sounds from the imprisoned miners increased in strength until they resolved themselves into song.

From the depths of the earth, from the darkness and despair, there came the strains of "Nearer my God, to Thee." Reverently the rescuers listened to this sublime death-song.

This hymn was followed by another—stronger, in tone: "Jesus, Lover of my soul." The rescuing party looked at each other in the dim light of the lamps. Tears were trickling down each miner's grimy face.

"Now, boys," said the foreman, raising his pick, "that's the music to work by."

Some time ago a railroad disaster occurred—even more horrible than the usual tragedy of this kind—and the cars, piled up on each other, took fire. The heat was so great that no one could approach the wreck. Then it was learned that several people, hopelessly pinned between broken timbers, were being slowly burned to death. This awful fact was not announced by oaths or by frantic cries for help, but by the chords of a hymn that reached the stricken crowd.

Started by a masculine voice—some thought it the engineer's—the sacred song was taken up by another, and then another, until the chorus swelled above the horrors of the scene:

E'en though it be a cross
That raiseth me—

Soon one voice dropped away, and then another, and then the third, so that

the agonized bystanders knew the very moment when the sufferers had passed into unconsciousness.

One of the most beautiful examples of the power of Christian song occurred at the fall of the Pemberton mills in Lawrence, Mass., many years ago. Suddenly, without warning, in the afternoon of a January day, the mill collapsed. It was filled with operatives. The ruins caught fire. Over eighty people were entrapped among the beams and girders, and were crushed, suffocated, or burned to death.

After the first cries for help, and the first walls of agony, when the hopelessness of their position became manifest to them, the doomed girls began to sing. Hymn after hymn rose from their parched throats. Voice after voice broke and was silenced. "Shall we gather at the river?" "Rock of Ages, cleft for me," rose distinctly above the roar of the flames. Thus the poor girls sang their way into death, by the sacred words that they had sung at church and Sunday-school, at home and among their looms.

The power of a Christian hymn has been one of the great beneficent forces in human life. It is almost impossible to overestimate it. Literature and art and oratory influence the emotions and conduct of men. Noble poetry haunts and inspires us. But in the trying crisis of life—in temptation, or misfortune, or sickness, or sorrow, or even death—myriads of souls have been comforted and helped by the sustaining influence of Christian song.

Many a boy, in his first battle with the evil of the world, has been morally arrested and saved from ruin, by the accident of hearing in a critical moment the strains of some dear old hymn, often sung in Sunday-school, or with mothers and sisters on a Sunday night in the dear old home. "That is music to live by!"—Youth's Companion.

All true prosperity begins by seeking first the kingdom of God and His righteousness.

A revival may always be had in any church that is willing to give up the world to get it.

Some preachers are afraid to declare that the wages of sin is death, for fear their pay will stop.

Whatever God requires us to do we can do easily, if we will but trust in Him for grace. The yoke of Christ is easy and His burden is light.

Abraham never wanted to stop and fence in any particular spot, because he had God's word for it that all the land of Canaan should be his.

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